the Bhopal gas victims' compensation case with the Union Carbide Company;

(b) by when the case is likely to be settled;

(c) whether Government are aware that the management of M/s. Union Carbide Co. has blamed the Indian Government as responsible for delaying the payments of compensation to the victims; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and what is the reaction of Govednment thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETROCHEMICALS IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH): (a) to (d) The District Judge, Bhopal, who is hearing the case filed by the Government of India against Union Carbide Corporation (UCC), has dismissed the interlocutory application of UCC regarding stay of the proceedings and election of forum by Government of India.

The Court has posted the application of Union of India for arguments on 17th August, 1987, regarding framing of two preliminary legal issues on liability of the multinational enterprise to pay damages to victims and non-maintainability of counter-claim by UCC against Union of India and Government of Madhya Pradesh on the ground of Sovereign Immunity. The time when the case is likely to be settled depends on the decision of the Court.

Pay ment of compensation to the victims would be commenced after the final resolution of the litigation against Union Carbide. It is Union Carbide which sought stay of the proceedings before the District Judge, Bhopal, which was opposed by the Government of India. Therefore, the question of Government of India delaying the legal proceedings does not arise. On the contrary, no effort is being spared to ensure that the victims get fair compensation expeditiously.

Multiple Pricing Policy in respect of Gas Cylinders

141. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI T. R. BALU:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the date on which Government introduced the multiple pricing policy in respect of cooking gas cylinders;

(b) what were the reasons which prompted Government to introduce this policy;

(c) the number of cases of malpractice which have come to the notice of Government since then;

(d) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to withdraw this policy immediately; and

(e) if not, what steps are being taken to plug the loopholes of this policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) Subsidy on LPG cylinders being used by non-domestic customers was withdrawn from 20-3-1987.

(b) Government do not see any justification for subsidy on LPG for uses other than domestic use.

(c) to (e) While introducing the scheme, Government have taken a number of measures like identification of non-domestic consumers, colour banding of cylinders for non-domestic use, adequate inspection by the Field Staff of oil companies, exemption to deserving categories, etc. The scheme is being monitored closely to take further remedial action wherever necessary. The measures intdoduced will not give any greater scope for malpractices.